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ABSTRACT

Summarized are proceedings of a 1976 meeting of the National Advisory Panel of VOTAP, the Vocational Training and Placement of the Severely Handicapped. It is explained that the advisory panel was formed to consider policy matters and technical direction of the project. Summarized are conference proceedings (including discussions of VOTAP project objectives and objectives of the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped); group discussions (attitude barriers, improving the nature of employment, and obstacles to employment); and recommendations for research and development in the three areas covered by group discussion. (CL)

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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

NATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL

December 1976

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by

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The Vocational Training and Placement of the Severely Handicapped project was a omprehensive assessment effort involving the contributions of a large number of people, oth AIR staff and a National Advisory Panel. The wide variety of contributions makes t difficult to accurately credit ideas, techniques, and suggestions to their originators.

The members of the National Advisory Panel were most helpful in their advice, uggestions, and criticisms.

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Preface

THE NEED

The national conscience is becoming more sensitive to the fact that many segments of American society do not receive the benefits to which they are entitled. This heightened sensitivity has led to expanded efforts to help the handicapped participate in the social, economic, and cultural mainstream of this society.

Legislation and court decisions are slowly providing the handicapped with their full civil rights as guaranteed by the Constitution, including full access to education and vocational training. However, as these legal steps are taken, the public must acknowledge the need of all handicapped people to be treated as full-fledged human beings--no longer to be unnecessarily institutionalized, regarded as second-class citizens, or denied the full benefits of American life.

In the last decade, much progress has been made in preparing the handicapped for gainful employment. Two significant steps taken during this time were the specific funding of vocational training for the handicapped in the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968 and 1976. Supported by this legislation, a number of innovative and high-quality programs for the handicapped are now operating in local school districts and other agencies.

Another significant step in improving legislation was the passage in 1975 of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142). This bill calls for massive expansion in authorized levels of the basic state grants program. The act has three major aspects: (1) it has no expiration date; (2) it makes a specific commitment to all handicapped children; and (3) it states that education must be extended to handicapped children as their fundamental right. The following are more specific implications of this legislation.

- Individualized educational programming is an essential component of appropriate education designed to meet the unique needs of handicapped children.
- To the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children should receive education with children who are not handicapped; in other words, special classes, separate schooling, or any other removal of the handicapped from the regular educational environment should be reduced as much as possible.
- Adequate testing should be provided to ensure that student placement is not racially or culturally discriminatory. Testing will be conducted in the child's native language or mode of communication unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.

Adherence to the requirements of these implications will help eliminate the barriers currently facing severely handicapped persons as they try to find employment.

While progress is being made in helping those classified as handicapped to maximize their potential for self-fulfillment and for useful and meaningful participation in society, much more needs to be done to help the severely handicapped. "Severely handicapped" persons are those who because of the severity of their problems need educational, social, psychological, and medical services beyond those offered by traditional and special education programs. Severely handicapped persons are seriously emotionally disturbed, profoundly or severely mentally retarded, or multiply handicapped. Also in this category are persons with severe language deprivations, perceptual-cognitive deprivations, a fragile physiological condition, and/or a number of abnormal behaviors. Abnormal behaviors may include a failure to attend to pronounced social stimuli, self-mutilation, durable and intense temper tantrums, and the absence of rudimentary verbal control. The impairment of the severely handicapped is considered to be relatively permanent (U.S. Office of Education, Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, 1975).

THE PROJECT

The Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (BEH) of the U.S. Office of Education has outlined two principal objectives for improving the fortunes of the severely handicapped: first, ". . . to enable the most severely handicapped children and youth to become as independent as possible, thereby reducing their requirement for institutional care and providing opportunity for self-development;" second, ". . . to stimulate the initiation, expansion, and improvement of vocational education programs for the handicapped throughout the country in order to assure that every handicapped youth will have career education training which is relevant to the job market, meaningful to his career aspirations, and realistic to his fullest potential."

In July 1975 BEH contracted with the American Institutes for Research to investigate and assess the vocational training and employment possibilities of persons with severe permanent handicaps. The AIR project is called Vocational Training and Placement of the Severely Handicapped (VOTAP), and its purpose is to provide information that will help to increase the vocational education and employment opportunities for such individuals.

A National Advisory Panel was formed to provide policy orientation and technical direction to the project, and to obtain expert assistance concerning the general objectives of the project, the clientele it addresses, current and prospective training and placement methodologies, and products. The panelists were drawn from the vocational education, special education, and rehabilitation communities. A list of the Advisory Panel members is included as Appendix A.

Early in the project it became desirable to clarify that the focus of the VOTAP project was to be on vocational or occupational education rather than career education even though the BEH objective cited above implied that career education aspects should be considered. Vocational education and training in VOTAP was conceived of as education or training related to the occupational development of the severely handicapped, age 14 and beyond. This definition went beyond "vocational education" in the narrow sense of the term, which implies skills training with a trade orientation.

Although the programs to be studied by VOTAP were for students 14 years and up, it was apparent that severely handicapped persons are especially in need

of occupational preparation before age 14, when prevocational training usually begins. For this reason, it was decided to include recommendations that may extend research and development activities down into the grade school and preschool years, but no attempt was made to deal with career education concerns in a comprehensive manner.

The specific objectives of the VOTAP project were to determine the following:

- What are the potential vocations for severely handicapped youth and adults?
- What vocational training programs are available for the severely handicapped?
- Do effective job placement programs exist? If so, where, and what services do they provide?
- What research and development activities might contribute to improved career/vocational education opportunities for the severely handicapped?

Project activities were to be conducted throughout with an eye to the dissemination and use of the resulting products. Appropriate education professionals were to be kept aware of the project and their assistance solicited as needed. The products resulting from the project were to be packaged in a form that facilitated their use.

The VOTAP project included five major activities. The first task was the preparation of an annotated bibliography of materials concerned with job placement of the severely handicapped.

The second task was to survey training and placement programs, to obtain descriptive data about them, and to identify particularly innovative or effective practices. Programs were selected from nominations according to geographic location, size, type of institution (public or private), and handicapping conditions of the clientele. Of the 333 programs surveyed, 169 programs responded. Guidelines for recognizing effective, innovative practices were drafted by the VOTAP project staff and were then reviewed by VOTAP's 13-member National Advisory Panel.

The third task was to prepare a handbook entitled Vocational Opportunities. This handbook identifies and discusses major barriers preventing the severely handicapped from obtaining vocational training and employment, and includes a description of strategies that can be used to surmount these barriers. The handbook contains lists of jobs obtained from the VOTAP survey that severely handicapped workers presently hold in sheltered workshops and competitive employment; it also contains suggestions as to how potential jobs may be opened to handicapped persons by managing relevant barriers.

The fourth task was to prepare a second handbook entitled Training Programs and Placement Services. This handbook contains one- to three-page descriptions of 152 programs. Innovative or effective practices are highlighted.

These practices were identified from survey returns and reviewed by using criteria drafted by the AIR research staff and critiqued by VOTAP's Nationa Advisory Panel and by BEH.

The last major task was to prepare a monograph entitled Research and Develo ment Recommendations. This monograph synthesizes the project findings and offers recommendations for further research and development in the area of vocational training and placement of the severely handicapped. These recom mendations are based on needs identified during the course of the project a on suggestions made by the National Advisory Panel.

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introduction

ECTIVES OF NATIONAL ISORY PANEL MEETING

The purpose of this document is to summarize the proceedings of a National Advisory Panel meeting held in August 1976 in San Francisco. The panel's intention was to identify vocational training and placement needs of the severely handicapped.

The National Advisory Panel was formed to provide policy orientation and technical direction to the project, and to obtain expert assistance concerning the general objectives of the project, the clientele it addresses, current and prospective training and placement methodologies, and products. The panelists were drawn from the vocational education, special education, and rehabilitation communities to assure that project staff could draw upon expert assistance from all relevant professional fields. (National Advisory Panel members are listed in Appendix A.)

The objectives of the National Advisory Panel meeting were to:

1. Identify vocational training and placement needs of the severely handicapped.

2. Identify barriers (environmental, societal, and those unique to particular handicaps) that hinder meeting the needs of the severely handicapped as they are trained to work and to find suitable employment.

3. Identify and formulate realistic solutions and specific strategies to overcome the identified barriers.

4. Identify dissemination information that will meet specific user needs and suggest effective dissemination procedures.

5. Formulate specific recommendations to BEH about ways in which it can work toward improving vocational training and placement opportunities for the severely handicapped.

PROCEEDINGS

The meeting began with an overview of USOE's thrust in the education of the handicapped, BEH's priorities, and the relevance of the VOTAP project awarded to the American Institutes for Research. This presentation was made by the USOE project officer, Dr. William E. Johnston, Jr., Education Program Specialist. The National Advisory Panel was then briefed on past and future project activities. The general goals, literature review, annotated bibliography, training and placement program survey forms and procedures, program descriptions, and project handbooks were reviewed.

The group then turned to the focal point of the meeting--identifying the vocational training and occupational placement needs of the severely handicapped. First, needs which were identified by the VOTAP survey were presented. Then panel members were asked to list five needs which they perceived as being primary. Once the needs were identified, they were prioritized. Small group discussions ensued in which these needs were considered in greater detail.

A summary of the research needs recommended for study by the panel members is provided in the section headed Recommendations for Research and Development, beginning on page 19.

summary of national advisory panel meeting

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

Following the introduction of panel members and AIR staff, Dr. Johnston opened the meeting with an informal overview of the relevance of the VOTAP project to the priorities of BEH. His remarks are summarized below.

Federal support of education for the handicapped began more than a century ago with the establishment of Gallaudet College for the deaf in 1864; in 1879 the American Printing House for the Blind began operating. In 1951 $675,000 was appropriated for research on education of the mentally retarded. In 1965 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed; Title I mandated education of the handicapped. Public Law 89-313, which amended the 1965 provisions for special education, provided support for the education of handicapped children in state-operated hospitals. Public Law 89-750, passed during the same congressional session, provided the basis for the current educational program for the handicapped and created the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped.

The 1968 Amendments of the Vocational Education Act of 1963 mandated that at least 10% of federal funds allocated under Part B be set aside for vocational education of the handicapped. The current level of the 10% set-aside is $42.7 million, with the same amount being matched by state and local funds. During the next six years approximately a dozen new bills were passed, covering early childhood education for the handicapped, establishing regional resource centers, and incorporating other provisions of benefit to the handicapped. In 1970 Public Law 91-230, the Education of the Handicapped Act, combined previously passed legislation into one comprehensive document. The Education Amendments of 1974 (Public Law 93-380) specified due process requirements to protect the rights of handicapped youth.

In 1975 the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was passed (Public Law 94-142). This act has three significant aspects: (1) it has no expiration date; (2) it makes a specific commitment to all handicapped children; and (3) it states that education must be extended to handicapped children as their right. The comprehensive provisions of this law and related federal legislation provide a firm foundation for building a coherent educational program for the handicapped.

IMARY BEH OBJECTIVES

The six primary objectives of BEH are to:

1. Encourage educational programming for severely handicapped children to enable them to become as independent as possible.
2. Assure that every handicapped child receives an appropriately designed education.
3. Assist the states in providing appropriate educational services to the handicapped.
4. Assure that every handicapped child who leaves school has had career education training.
5. Assure that teachers of handicapped children have been trained to aid each child in reaching her or his full potential.
6. Secure the enrollment of preschool-aged handicapped children in federal, state, and local educational and daycare programs.

SEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

The Research Projects branch of BEH is committed to determining how research can contribute to achievement of the six objectives. Major areas of emphasis are:

1. Assessment of the effectiveness of special education curricula and procedures
2. Development of new curricula, materials, and techniques
3. Encouragement of the broadest possible diffusion, utilization, and implementation of effective procedures.

The research program's goal for 1977 is to continue and expand a program of support for research which is responsive to overall BEH objectives. Two chief criteria are used in making awards: (1) that children with all handicaps (e.g., visually handicapped, orthopedically impaired, learning disabled) requiring special education are funded; and (2) that the projects coincide with the six BEH objectives.

As of August 1, 1976, the Bureau had approved 156 research projects at a total cost of over $17 million. In addition to money awarded to institutions of higher education, state and local education agencies, and nonprofit research organizations, a small portion of the funds supported 20 student research efforts in education, physical education, and recreation for handicapped children. A wide range of topic areas is represented among these projects, with the target population ranging from preschool age through age fifty-four.

THE VOTAP PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The VOTAP study will present the state of the art regarding training and placement possibilities for the severely handicapped. It should avoid stereotypes in specifying jobs which can be done by persons with various handicapping conditions. The concept of individual differences and individual programming must also be addressed. In summary, the project was conceptualized as:

1. Providing a framework for the development of career/vocational education programs that are relevant to the needs of the severely handicapped and the needs of the labor market
2. Presenting adoptable/adaptable methods for developing vocational training and placement resources
3. Defining individual job opportunities that are appropriate for the target population and present in the labor market
4. Presenting methods to achieve job development and job placement of the severely handicapped
5. Identifying significant needs for further research in this area

SELECTION OF NEEDS

After a brief history of the involvement of the American Institutes for Research in educational research and an outline of VOTAP project activities to date, each panel member was asked to identify five needs relating to the vocational training and satisfactory occupational placement of the severely handicapped which she/he viewed as being of primary importance. These needs resulted in the following list:

1. Adequate source of income (e.g., conflict of earnings from gainful employment with Supplementary Security Income)
2. Architectural accessibility
3. Employer incentives to hire the disabled
4.* Prevocational training of the disabled during the school years (including family orientation)
5. Increased involvement of business and the community in employment of the handicapped
6. Enforcement of federal and state laws regarding the handicapped
7.* Promotion of community education and awareness of the disabled

*e needs are within the purview of BEH, as identified by Dr. Johnston.

8. Provision of general services (such as health, recreation, and social)

9.* Recognition of legal rights of the handicapped

10.* Job development for the handicapped

11.* Contemporary training for existing jobs

12.* Sensitization of employers to the disabled (attitude development)

13.* Dissemination of existing programs to vocational education professionals

14. Physical needs (e.g., availability and reasonable cost of transportation services)

15. Emotional and social readiness of the disabled in society at large

16. Advocacy for individual needs

This list, together with needs identified as most pressing by the VOTAP training and placement program survey, was presented to the panel at large. (The VOTAP survey showed the training programs indicated a need for more money, and placement programs indicated a need for support by business and organized labor and a need for more knowledge of the program to be disseminated in the business community and the community at large.) The panel discussed and amplified these needs. It was pointed out that acceptability of the handicapped worker by other employees depends on the type of handicap; this is due to misunderstanding on the part of the general population as to what the handicap is, not its visibility. It was also noted that attitude training of the handicapped worker's fellow employees is more important than training the personnel manager, and in this instance, the physical symptoms <u>are</u> important.

STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The panel was asked to select six major areas among the listed needs to develop further by identifying strategies and recommendations to accommodate the need. The following points were made during panel discussion:

1. After vocational training, providing transportation services is the greatest need.

2. There is a need for different levels of placement, especially for the mentally/emotionally handicapped. An example of this need is the sheltered workshop client who is technically well-trained in a homogeneous setting but then has difficult upon entering a heterogeneous setting as a result of not being emotionally ready for that environment.

3. It is important to work with the system, confronting institutional biases. Career development is the issue; it must be an interdisciplinary effort, encompassing the total environment.

4. It may be a disservice to restrict the concept of vocational rehabilitation to remunerative, competitive situations. A major thrust should be occupational preparation and placement of severely handicapped individuals within the home. If they are made independent, then other family members can take remunerative jobs. Another aspect of this point is attendant care for the handicapped. Many severely handicapped persons are eliminated from the labor market because they have to remain in nursing homes, even though they could survive independently with a certain amount of care from a trained attendant. Many states have difficulty in obtaining funding for this service.

*hese needs are within the purview of BEH, as identified by Dr. Johnston.

5. It may be necessary to accept unemployment as a lifestyle. With the current labor market, unemployment is a threat to nonhandicapped individuals as well.

6. A positive self-image is important; developing self-confidence is more significant for the handicapped individual than for the nonhandicapped.

It was mentioned that as a result of technology, many individuals can be employed if they have capacity-enhancing devices. The question arises, however, as to who is to finance these devices. The employers? Federal or state government? Three possibilities were suggested by panel members: (1) adopting an advocacy orientation, e.g., putting money into handicapped legislation to provide adaptive equipment; (2) providing industry with writeoff incentives to re-engineer the work environment; and (3) having the handicapped worker finance the enhancing devices under an arrangement to deduct the expense from her or his salary.

Small discussion groups were then created with panel members being asked to choose three topics from the list of needs as a focus for the discussions. Dr. Johnston clarified that BEH's role ends with education; dealing with the work environment, the Supplementary Security Income issue, and architectural accessibility are tje responsibilities of other agencies. One goal of the VOTAP project is to give information to the Chief State School Officers, directors of special education, and local school districts regarding what schools can do to focus on the severely handicapped. What kinds of skills have they been trained in, what kinds of jobs can they be employed in, how can their capacities be augmented, and what further research is needed?

group discussions

GROUP DISCUSSIONS: FIRST DAY

Three general categories were created in which to organize all the listed needs: (1) attitudes regarding the handicapped; (2) improving the nature of employment; and (3) obstacles to employment. The National Advisory Panel divided into three discussion groups (as shown in Appendix B), with each group intending to focus on one of the categories of needs. The groups were given the following questions to structure their discussions.

1. What are the major components of the problems that need attention?

2. What are the obstacles particular to the severely handicapped? How can these obstacles be eliminated or managed?

3. What are practical solutions to the problem(s)?

4. Based on these solutions, what recommendations would you make for future research and development activities?

At the end of the day, the full panel reconvened to review reports from the three discussion groups. These reports are summarized below.

UP I: THE ATTITUDE BARRIER

Introduction. Group I discussed the attitude barrier that handicapped individuals face when attempting to obtain satisfactory vocational training and placement. The group divided the concept of "attitude" into two major areas: (1) external attitudes--those of employers, unions, fellow workers, agency staff personnel, parents, and the general public; and (2) personal/individual attitudes--those of the handicapped individual toward him- or herself, that is, self-concept.

Obstacles. The discussion highlighted the following obstacles to overcoming the attitude barrier:

1. Public ignorance, for example, the confusion of mental retardation with mental illness

2. Employer concern with safety in the work environment, for example, the effect of the presence of handicapped persons on work efficiency

3. Morale factor of the other employees, for example, the notion that a distorted body implies a distorted mind

4. TV stereotyping, for example, the fact that handicapped individuals are rarely shown--"It depresses people"

5. Extremely high/low parent expectations of the handicapped child, for example, parental fear of the child failing in a competitive setting. Parental concerns also include the problems of losing the Supplementary Security Income if the handicapped individual is employed, and the future of the handicapped child when the parent dies.

Solutions. The group noted the following solutions to the attitude problem:

1. A change of values on the part of society

2. Training for professionals

3. Successful experiences with employers--one success leads to further successes

4. Personal contact with handicapped individuals plus education of the public. CONTACT + INFORMATION--neither one alone is enough--was emphasized as the critical solution.

5. Legislative mandates

6. Integration of the handicapped in housing, businesses, and industries

7. Achievement models for emulation, for example, the Handicapped Olympics. Also, lessons might be learned from the Black experience--make the handicapped experience unique, select areas of achievement, and teach pride in both home and school settings.

8. Expansion of the definition of "vocational education"

Recommendations. The following recommendations for research and development were suggested:

1. Provide for information and personal contact with the disabled in the form of attitude education packages to change attitudes, cultural values, and myths.

2. Study successful models of mainstreaming. Also study the creation of positive and negative attitudes (in the individual and others) as a result of the mainstreaming experience.

3. Review standards/certification, etc., of special education teachers vs. regular teachers.

4. Study effective techniques of parent counseling/guidance.

5. Study alternative provisions for medical insurance for the disabled in lieu of welfare, Supplementary Security Income, etc.

6. Conduct international research on models/methods that are successful and that can be replicated in other settings.

7. Give positive judgment to other outcomes for the disabled besides competitive employment.

ROUP II: IMPROVING THE NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT

Introduction. Group II identified problems that arise in improving the nature of employment for the handicapped, specified obstacles in this area, and suggested solutions for eliminating these obstacles.

1. Too much emphasis on preparation for the secondary labor market

It was pointed out that a major problem is in improving the nature of employment for the severely handicapped in that these persons are too frequently prepared for and placed in the secondary labor market, not the primary labor market; that is, they are restricted to poor-paying, dead-end, boring jobs. Thus, concern should not simply be with the number of placements, but with the quality of placements as well.

It was also noted that even though most people would probably prefer to move into the primary market, others might not, and that the critical issue is to provide as many options as possible. The discussion that followed resulted in the concensus that:

- The severely handicapped should be encouraged to seek employment which meets personal needs and goals.

- The skills of the handicapped should be upgraded as much as possible to help meet personal goals--that is, the skilled should be helped to move to a higher skill level, the unskilled to skilled, and the unemployable to employable status.

- It was strongly emphasized that "upgrading" should be in accord with the desires and interests of the individual involved, not on the basis of someone else's predilection, however well motivated.

2. Lack of information about career possibilities

Discussion then turned to problems that keep severely handicapped people from learning about the range of career possibilities open to them and from taking advantage of such possibilities. The first problem suggested was of early intervention. Concern was expressed that early intervention affects final job choice and, indeed, the possibility exists that early intervention might lead to premature tracking and the reduction of choice. A countering statement was that the goal is early guidance, not early training for specific jobs, and that the goal of such intervention should be early awareness of career possibilities. Some tracking is inevitable, and sterotypes are more likely to be perpetuated if guidance is not given. The emphasis, it was suggested, should be to help a person mount a career ladder in an area of interest.

3. Lack of comprehensive assessment procedures and some general problems in designing training programs

In addition to helping the individual discover what opportunities might be available, group members pointed out that there must be better assessment of individual capabilities and use of information gained in planning educational programs. Concerning the former point, it was noted that there are four vocationally relevant areas in which individual capabilities and characteristics should be assessed:

- Self-care--Can the person take care of his or her personal needs?
- Psychological--Does the person have mental problems related or unrelated to the handicap?
- Medical--Does the person have medical problems beyond the basic handicap (seizures, for example) which eliminate or restrict employment?
- Social/cultural--Does the person relate to society, employers, other people?

Most approaches to assessment deal with only one of these areas, and measures sensitive to all four are needed. Group members agreed that such measures would be very useful in designing better educational programs for the individual, and in determining careers at which a particular handicapped person could reasonably hope to succeed.

Regarding the last point, finding jobs that similarly handicapped people have performed successfully was suggested as a strategy. This approach, sometimes referred to as "train then place," was rejected since group members felt that it might restrict the handicapped to traditional or sterotyped jobs. By contrast, job development, sometimes referred to as "place then train," in which on-the-job training is combined with other training and support services to prepare people for jobs that the handicapped do not now typically perform, is an approach now gaining support, according to some of the panelists. A general discussion of problems in developing appropriate training programs followed. Particular problems cited were:

- Determining which jobs or tasks are best taught on the job and which are best taught in school
- Assuring that training programs keep up to date regarding medical and technological developments that are continually opening new job possibilities
- Assuring that educational programs recognize and encourage individual talents and motivations

4. Lack of incentives to hire the handicapped and failure to adjust job demands

This problem was seen by the group as being composed of two subproblems:

- The absence of an atmosphere which causes employers to seek and employ handicapped workers
- The inadequacy of present methods for altering the job or the working environment to accommodate handicapped workers

The first subproblem is reflected in the general lack of incentive for affirmative action regulations. Affirmative action was emphasized, and it was suggested that quotas, deadlines, and similar requirements are needed if significant progress is to be made.

The lack of ubiquitous procedures for job restructuring (i.e., the reallotment of traditional job duties) and for job redesign (i.e., the alteration of the work place) were cited as examples of the second subproblem. Often handicapped people are barred from a job because of one or two duties they cannot perform, or because of a work station at which they cannot function efficiently. These impediments are often unnecessary, but too little is being done to remove them.

At a more general level, it was suggested that an underlying problem is that a climate does not exist in which the handicapped are considered to be job candidates as a matter of course and in which job modifications are routinely undertaken. The latter could benefit the nonhandicapped as well as the handicapped. It was suggested that the overall strategy of establishing a more desirable atmosphere should include tactics directed at each of the subproblems.

GROUP III: OBSTACLES TO EMPLOYMENT

Obstacles. The group members highlighted the following obstacles to employment:

1. Problems that pertain directly to the impairments of the severely handicapped individual as handicapped individuals relate to work

   - Psychological barriers--how a severely handicapped person feels toward him- or herself--his or her lack of confidence and poor self-concept. This is created by the way the handicapped person perceives the attitudes of his or her family and others.
   - Nature of the handicap--every handicapped person has specific needs, problems, and abilities. It is important that handicapped individuals be given individual attention and assistance in overcoming their problems.
   - Social skills--problems relating to knowing and being able to perform appropriate social behaviors. Important social behaviors that might be problem areas include the ability to perform normal employee social rituals, to communicate, and to maintain an acceptable appearance.
   - Self-help skills--problems relating to physical characteristics of the severely handicapped, including lack of bowel and bladder control, offensive body odor, and the need for special devices in order to use certain equipment and facilities

2. Obstacles that are imposed upon the severely handicapped by others

   - Attitudes of others may be obstacles, especially if those attitudes reflect any of the following opinions:
     - The severely disabled cannot get to work on time.
     - No work can be performed as well by the handicapped as by the nonhandicapped.

- Other employees will be disturbed by handicapped co-workers.

- Insurance costs more if handicapped workers are on-site.

- Parents can also present a barrier if their attitudes include feelings that:

  - The child is unable to leave the security of the family.

  - The child should not be encouraged to work.

  - The child should be sheltered and protected.

- Partial solutions to these problems may be found through educating the general public to the advantages of employing the handicapped and to the successes already achieved by many individuals.

3. Physical barriers that interfere with employment of the severely disabled

   - Barriers to transportation include lack of on- and off-ramps on buses, adequate door size for wheelchairs, street curbs, etc.

   - Architectural barriers include the lack of ramps, street curbs, raised door identification, color contrast, and knurled door handles, as well as height of elevator buttons, door handles, and water fountains.

   - Housing barriers include restrictive zoning laws in some neighborhoods that prevent the handicapped from living together in a group.

4. Barriers that result from not synthesizing or disseminating information to the public and employers regarding the severely handicapped

   - Inappropriate training and placement of the severely disabled

   - Lack of a central collection of data, research, acceptable training programs, and available jobs for the severely disabled

   - Lack of interest and concern regarding the employment of the severely disabled

   - Tendency to treat the disabled without considering their individual differences

After discussing these obstacles to employment, it was noted that selective mainstreaming is a positive action that increases contact and expands the information nonhandicapped persons have concerning the handicapped. However, it was reported that mainstreaming can also reinforce stereotypes and negative attitudes if not properly handled.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS: SECOND DAY

The three discussion groups reconvened to consider further the three areas of: (1) attitudes; (2) improving the nature of employment; and (3) obstacles to employment. The groups were given the following tasks and guidelines to structure their discussions:

- Tasks

  - Identify problem areas (state as problems).

  - Identify barriers to solving each problem.

  - Develop strategies (methods) to surmount the barriers and solve problems.

  - Develop a set of research and development recommendations for BEH (be as concrete and specific as possible).

- Guidelines

  - Choose problem areas that are within BEH jurisdiction (the education of individuals).

  - Develop strategies and recommendations for the problem areas that are amenable to practical solutions.

The afternoon session opened with a full panel meeting to review reports from the three discussions groups. The following points were summarized for each group.

GROUP 1: DISCUSSION SUMMARY

PROBLEM AREAS

1. General lack of education and information among the general public, parents, employers, professionals, fellow employees, etc.

2. Low expectations of the disabled among the general public, parents, employers, etc.

3. The value system that emphasizes beauty, charm, mental ability, etc.

4. Poor self-image on the part of the disabled

5. Lack of exposure among professionals (generalists particularly) in dealing with the problems of the handicapped

Barriers

1. Lack of teacher training in dealing with the handicapped

2. Lack of a comprehensive curriculum to develop the disabled person's living skills and job skills

3. Reluctance of the mass media to present role models for the handicapped and to meet its responsibilities to the handicapped

4. Professionals are sometimes divided into splinter groups, often as a result of servi specific handicapped populations. Professionals who serve and act as advocates for particular group may occasionally promote them at the expense of another handicapped group.

Strategies to Surmount Barriers

1. Create advocacy groups for the disabled.

2. Develop positive role models for the disabled to overcome low expectations.

3. Involve parents in the rehabilitation effort.

4. Provide success stories of the handicapped; make handicapped individuals visible to the public.

5. Set up decision-making situations for the handicapped.

6. Identify the things that an individual with a handicap can do well to help overcome problems of low self-esteem.

7. Develop different levels of employment for various levels of handicapping conditions.

8. Broaden the definition of employment in our society to include home employment and other forms of employment.

GROUP II: DISCUSSION SUMMARY

The second-day meeting was primarily concerned with identifying research and development activities that would help to overcome some of the obstacles identified at the first meeting. Group members felt that the effectiveness of whatever interventions were suggested should be of constant concern; that is, research and development activities designed to implement their recommendations should always be evaluated to find out what happens, and to whom, when the particular intervention is used.

PROBLEM AREA

There is a tendency in current education programs to look at persons 16 years old rather than those 7 years old.

Barrier

Teacher training is falling short at the preservice, inservice, and continuing education levels.

Strategies to Surmount Barrier

1. Initiate interventions that can benefit the handicapped in the vocational system.

2. Maximize parent and family involvement in the intervention process.

3. Begin manpower programs in the schools to develop options in the curricula. Demonstrate the effectivenes of these alternative curricula (outcomes are more expensive to evaluate since this requires follow-up of program graduates).

4. Attempt to demonstrate a cooperative liaison between rehabilitation programs in the schools and community agencies.

5. Conduct payoff-oriented research. In job development, write the job qualifications to meet employer needs. These components should then be incorporated in the education program (i.e., the curriculum should be modified to include job specifications derived from job and task analyses).

6. Develop normative measures to find out about the population to be placed. Analyze the validity of present measures (currently, IQ test, personality tests, and aptitude tests are being used). There may be a curvilinear rather than linear relationship between test scores and job performance.

7. Find a way to measure how the handicapped individual views him- or herself in society.

8. Identify and evaluate the differentiated effects of incentives to hire the handicapped--fiscal, moral, legislative, and social incentives. (Legislative incentives cannot be researched on an experimental basis, but they can be evaluated.)

9. Develop and evaluate marketing strategies for hiring the handicapped; i.e., develop a need and then adapt the product (the handicapped person) to meet the needs of the consumer.

10. Have training programs for handicapped persons in schools, for school practitioners, and for employers.

11. Bridge the gap between vocational education and special education. Dual credentialism is a possibility; either bring the two fields together or have cross-over people.

12. Create a consortium for marketing the training programs. The California consortium created to develop the MAVE external degree program (Master of Arts in Vocational Education) was cited as an example of getting groups to work together that otherwise would not have cooperated.

? III: DISCUSSION SUMMARY

PROBLEM AREA

Lack of a healthy self-concept

Barriers

1. Negative attitudes of others
2. Overprotection by others
3. Rejection by others
4. Failures
5. Lack of encouragement and support from significant adults
6. Lack of feedback, or neglect
7. Low expectations
8. Lack of acknowledgement of the handicap

Strategies to Surmount Barriers

1. Organize parent education programs.
2. Develop positive student interaction programs.
3. Use positive reinforcement techniques in counseling.
4. Prepare the employer and the community for dealing with the handicapped.
5. Inititate transitional work experience programs.
6. Conduct a positive public awareness campaign based on "hard facts" of successful employment.

PROBLEM AREA

Constraints imposed by the specific handicapping condition

Barriers

1. Lack of awareness of aids and appliances that could be used
2. Economic inability to buy these devices
3. Lack of appropriate devices to meet special needs
4. Lack of trained personnel to assist handicapped persons

5. Lack of employer awareness of how the handicapped person can function

6. Lack of medical treatment and therapy

7. Lack of command of the language

Strategies to Surmount Barriers

1. Provide incentives to employers to accept the severely handicapped.

2. Develop a public relations approach to encourage employers to hire handicapped workers.

3. Support and expand rehabilitation centers focused on R&D for various handicapping conditions.

4. Increase public awareness of the ways that problems of the handicapped have been overcome on a variety of jobs.

PROBLEM AREA

Lack of acceptable social skills

Barriers

1. Inability to communicate

2. Rejection of the handicapped by co-workers

3. Low frustration level

4. Health and hygiene limitations

5. Inability to accept directions and to work with others

Strategies to Surmount Barriers

1. Provide systematic counseling and training at school, reinforced at home and at work.

2. Develop an advocate who will orient the handicapped person in the work situation.

3. Identify work situations in which the individual can work even though he or she has inadequate social skills.

PROBLEM AREA

Impairments imposed by others

Barriers

1. Decisions by others which result in appropriate training and placement

2. Overprotective parents

3. Employers not knowing what to expect, thus assigning the handicapped to lower-level jobs

4. Inappropriate medical attention

5. Ethnic and cultural overtones regarding the handicapped

Strategies to Surmount Barriers

1. Orient employers on the facts surrounding handicapped persons' productivity.

2. Involve parents in early intervention and education.

3. Counsel the handicapped person as to what he or she will encounter.

PROBLEM AREA

Physical barriers that prevent employability

Barriers

1. Inadequate transportation

2. Architectural inaccessibility

3. Inadequate housing

4. Inadequate communication

5. Lack of suitable aids and appliances

6. Lack of job station modification

Strategies to Surmount Barriers

1. Develop public transportation regulations that accommodate the handicapped.

2. Apply improved technological knowledge to develop new devices.

3. Legislate licensing and zoning changes relative to housing to permit handicapped groups to live together.

4. Train persons to manage facilities occupied by the handicapped.

5. Improve the architectural design and construction of facilities.

PROBLEM AREA

Accessibility to the individual of all resources, information, and assistance through th services of a locally available ombudsman or advocate

Barriers

1. Lack of trained ombudsmen

2. Lack of information access routes (integrated information networks)

3. Lack of finances to support an ombudsman system when functioning

4. Lack of the individual's awareness of alternatives

Strategies to Surmount Barriers

1. Work with the media to disseminate information about resources.

2. Request new enabling legislation regarding the ombudsman role.

3. Require mandatory prevocational training for the handicapped.

recommendations for research and development

The National Advisory Panel made recommendations for future research and development in three main areas: (1) overcoming the attitude barrier; (2) improving the nature of employment; and (3) removing obstacles to employment. While the different problem areas are not independent, it is nevertheless useful to separate the panel's statements and recommendations with respect to these three focal points.

THE ATTITUDE BARRIER

1. Conduct research on the many aspects of mainstreaming. For example, does mainstreaming reinforce or eliminate negative attitudes? Does it deny or guarantee services? At what age is mainstreaming most effective?

2. Explore the attitudes of the mass media towards the disabled. How does the media reinforce stereotypes? Consider not just the mass media, but educational publishers, etc.

3. Study the relationship of the disabled individual's self-image to his or her employability (or ability to complete work tasks). To what degree is self-image a barrier to employment? What is the source and reinforcement for a poor self-image? What are strategies that help overcome poor self-image?

4. Study effective models for teamwork among professionals, parents, and handicapped individuals. Explore methods of developing cooperative relationships. Identify positive practices.

5. Identify methods and materials to use in the classroom as well as in teacher-training sessions to inform students/faculty about the problems of the handicapped.

6. Identify exemplary programs/practices/materials that deal with attitude problems. Study ways of adapting such programs, etc., to the problems of the handicapped.

7. Adapt existing programs for the nonhandicapped, for example, career education, to the needs of the handicapped.

8. Study the "Black experience" model and how it might be applied to the attitude barriers facing the disabled.

IMPROVING THE NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT

1. Determine the validity of present assessment techniques used to place handicapped workers in training and employment programs.

2. Develop more sophisticated assessment techniques that will measure self-care, psychological, medical, and social/cultural factors. Included should be an index of how the person sees him- or herself relative to the system.

3. Develop methods for assuring that client evaluation, education, and job-entry requirements pertain to skills that will actually be needed upon job entry. (Existing task analyses and performance-based educational procedures probably provide many of the necessary techniques; the problem is that they are not widely enough applied.)

4. Determine where the total educational system succeeds and where it fails, and develop means to overcome the failings. These may include revised teacher-training procedures; new curriculum materials; manpower programs in the schools; job development teams in the schools; increasing parental involvement; or involving other community agencies in school activities.

5. Investigate ways (such as dual credentials) to bridge the gap between special and vocational education.

6. Develop employer/education/consumer councils to plan and develop educational programs and placement procedures for severely handicapped persons.

7. Build incentives for employers to hire and train the handicapped. These incentives which will create a demand for handicapped workers, may be fiscal, moral, or responses to social or legislative pressures. A possible approach to this recommendation is more emphasis on "governmental intervention." If the federal government displays a high commitment to and interest in the handicapped population, it is likely that state and local government, as well as private industry, will follow suit.

8. Develop information programs to gain public support (and demand) for efforts to improve vocational opportunities for the handicapped.

9. Develop procedures for job restructuring and job redesign and teach people how to implement these procedures. This might include providing school children with practice in selecting alternate ways of dividing tasks when working together, which would make rearrangment of job duties seem natural and would provide everyone with basic skills in job restructuring. Under the rubric of "job development," materials should be prepared to help assess employer needs and write job specifications to meet those needs.

10. Develop continuing education programs to help people in business and industry work more effectively with the handicapped.

11. Improve dissemination of information by deliberately using sophisticated marketing approaches. (Information about effective procedures for three types of training is particularly important: training for school personnel, training of handicapped persons in the schools, and training for employers.)

OBSTACLES TO EMPLOYMENT

1. Develop improved procedures for matching handicapped people to jobs.

2. Identify and disseminate success data and examples of employment.

3. Study alternatives for assessing the handicapped person's interest and abilities, especially through job-sampling techniques.

4. Develop and test alternative training models for public school personnel working with the handicapped to bring about realistic vocational training.

5. Explore alternative strategies for teaching social skills.

6. Experimentally identify feasible alternatives for orienting trainees/co-workers.

7. Apply job re-engineering to restructure work stations.

8. Develop and refine procedures for assessing the strengths of the individual and his or her job potential on a task basis.

9. Conduct further research to improve aids and appliances in terms of maintainability, versatility, and cost.

10. Conduct research to determine the most cost effective ways of constructing architecturally accessible buildings.

11. Develop and test different models for synthesizing information and developing action plans for employment of the severely handicapped.

2. Explore helping the family accept and support the development and employment of the severely handicapped family member.

3. Test different strategies for helping prospective employers understand and utilize the strengths of the severely handicapped.

appendices

APPENDIX A

NATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL MEMBERS[1]

Name	Organization	Position
verett Barton	California Department of Rehabilitation 830 K Street Mall Sacramento, California 95814	Facilities Specialist, Community Resources Development Section
alph Bohn	San Jose State University 125 South Seventh Street San Jose, California 95192	Dean of Continuing Education
ordon Christian	National Association for Retarded Citizens 1838 El Camino Real - Suite 211 Burlingame, California 94010	OJT Coordinator
. Harry Jennison	Children's Hospital at Stanford 520 Willow Road Palo Alto, California 94304	Executive and Medical Director
erle Karnes	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 403 East Healey Street Champaign, Illinois 61820	Professor of Special Education, Institute for Child Behavior and Development
ussell Kirbey	Braille Institute of America 741 North Vermont Avenue Los Angeles, California 90029	Executive Director
erbert Kramer	Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation 999 Asylum Avenue Hartford, Connecticut 06105	Director of Communications
harles Richman	Association of Rehabilitation Facilities 5530 Wisconsin Avenue - Suite 955 Washington, D. C. 20015	Director of Product Development
orman Silberberg	Sister Kenny Institute 1800 Chicago Avenue Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404	Director, Research and Education Division
avid Taxis	Los Angeles County Schools 9300 East Imperial Downey, California 90242	Assistant Director for Curriculum and Instruction Administrator of Vocational Education
lsie Vickery	Poplar Center 515 East Poplar Avenue San Mateo, California 94401	Director
rnest Willenberg	Los Angeles Unified School District 450 North Grand Avenue Los Angeles, California 90012	Assistant Superintendent for Special Education

[1] Dr. Jennison and Dr. Taxis were unable to attend the meeting but will continue to serve as Advisory Panel members.

Name	Organization	Position
Tom Williamson	Della Maggiore Center for the Retarded 2300 Clove Drive San Jose, Califonria 95128	Director, Hope Adult Development Center
Ex officio member:		
William E. Johnston, Jr.	Bureau of Education for the Handicapped	Education Program Specialist

APPENDIX B

AGENDA

Monday, August 30--AM

Introductions
Meeting schedule review
Brief discussion of AIR and of project activities to date
Statement about Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (BEH)
Questions
Identification of needs by panel members
Presentation of needs from survey
Presentation of needs identified by panel members
Selection of most important needs for discussion
Organization of small groups

Monday, August 30--PM

Small-group discussions of strategies and recommendations
Brief report from group leaders to large group
Discussion of recommendations generated by small groups

Tuesday, August 31--AM

Small-group discussions of strategies and recommendations

Tuesday, August 31--PM

Brief report from group leaders to large group
Review of progress on Handbook 1 with reactions from panel members
Wrap-up of both days

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Advisory Panel Members

Everett Barton
Ralph Bohn
Gordon Christian
Merle Karnes
Russell Kirbey
Herbert Kramer
Charles Richman
Norman Silberberg
Elsie Vickery
Ernest Willenberg
Tom Williamson

American Institutes for Research Staff

Judith Appleby
Melanie Austin
Paul Cook, Project Director
Peter Dahl
Gordon Funk, Past Project Director

merican Institutes for Research Staff (continued)

Peggy Gale
Carol Kaplan
Robert Weisgerber

. S. Office of Education Project Officer

William E. Johnston, Jr.
Education Program Specialist
Bureau of Education for the Handicapped

DISCUSSION GROUP MEMBERS

Group I	Group II	Group III
verett Barton-Chairman	Ralph Bohn-Chairman	Ernest Willenberg-Chairman
erbert Kramer	Charles Richman	Merle Karnes
om Williamson	William Johnston	Elsie Vickery
ordon Christian	Norman Silberberg	Russell Kirbey